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Resources
The art of assisting a community to enhance effectiveness in a way that they feel they did it themselves.  Crane, 2002: 31

Introduction

How We Got Where We Are: An Overview

The Coaching for Community and Organizational Change Initiative emerged in response not only to the growing number of foundation-funded projects that use some sort of coaching to support community and organizational capacity building and change efforts, but also to the changes in how people engage in community development in a flat world. When the Regional Rural Development Centers began our first foray into coaching for community change in 2003 as part of the second phase of the Rural Community College Initiative (RCCI), we discovered that there were no training materials or curriculum available. As a result we worked with coaches from other initiatives to identify key skills, approaches, and tools related to this work. Most importantly we designed training that also focused on the coaching mindset and an opportunity for participants to distinguish coaching from other roles they may play in a community context. From these connections, we found others involved in coaching and interested in learning more about who was doing coaching and how. With funding from W.K. Kellogg Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Northwest Area Foundation and support from the Regional Rural Development Centers, we convened a first meeting of coaches involved in community and organizational change initiatives in 2006. The Boise coaching roundtable included coaches involved at the community and organizational level, intermediaries who hire and oversee coaches, and funders involved in supporting coaching elements of change-focused projects. The meeting resulted in several short papers and some recommendations on next steps. In San Antonio we followed up on some of those recommendations and generated ideas for the development of curricula, a field guide, an evaluation of the coaching function and role, and a lively vibrant community of practice. Since that time we have learned about more community change initiatives that utilize coaching and discovered a growing need for training resources. Our current grant with W. K. Kellogg provides partial funding to follow up on these recommendations. Thus, this coaches’ curriculum is a work in progress.

With no training resources available, previous directors of community change efforts involving coaching sought out consultants with a strong background and experience in working in community change initiatives to be coaches. As we looked at integrating this approach into the Land-grant system, we saw a need to develop curriculum to help people transition from previous roles as experts, teachers, and facilitators to the role of community coach. At the same time the resources related to life, executive, and personal coaching were growing exponentially. While some see the basics of coaching as the same whichever the target, our inquiry into successful coaching in community change initiatives led us to believe that this work is fundamentally different and deserves attention on its own.
In our first coaches training we attempted to capture the things that had made the coaching function so important in the previous RCCI phases and in the Kellogg funded Mid-South Delta Initiative, and at the same time adapt those elements to culture and mission of the Land-grant system. Over the past 5 years, we have learned much about how coaches can help community change initiatives engage community members in proactively planning for a positive and healthy future, but there is much more to learn. Thus, we invite you to join our community of practice around community coaching as we continue to learn together and build our knowledge of this important approach to community work. This curriculum strives to harness the successes and lessons from previous and existing coaching for community change efforts with current research and teaching on coaching and couch it in a framework for community development. We invite you to help us mold this practice for yourself and for others who will find themselves engaged in community change work.

Organization of Materials

In this notebook we will provide you with an overview of how coaching has come be to an important component of many current community change. As we build new relationships among educational institutions, communities, regional centers, and other technical assistance organizations, coaching can enhance the abilities of all to work for strong and healthy communities.

The notebook has three sections:
1. Course Overview
2. Session materials and worksheets
3. Resources Section

In this Overview section, we include information on the training program's schedule, format and approach to learning. We also have included some ideas of how we can develop a learning community to support our coaching in the field and to learn from one another.

The second section of the notebook includes the course materials and activities. Session descriptions include and overview, assignments, and readings. Each session will include objectives, activities, homework, worksheets as needed, suggested journal entry topic, and additional resources where appropriate.

The third section will expand as we identify additional resources that may be useful to you in your role as coach or to the team with which you will be working.
Course Description

This program will offer Extension educators and their partners an opportunity to learn more about coaching as an approach to community and organizational change work. The course will provide two case studies of successful coaching for community change programs, provide information on additional resources, and offer opportunities for participants to learn from their own experience and that of their colleagues.

Specific objectives include:

• Be able to describe how coaching is different from other roles such as teacher, facilitator, consultant, mentor, or advisor.
• Determine when to wear the “coaching hat” to help resolve confusion about what is a coach as opposed to “my” regular job.
• Distinguish between community coaching and other forms of coaching.
• Introduce participants to the 6 Rs of community/organizational coaching.
• Learn to identify and to create coachable moments.
• Practice skills related to coaching activities.
• Identify what communities get from a coach and describe how communities can benefit from a coach.
• Identify issues, concerns, and strategies for navigating among community members, intermediaries, and funders.
• Describe the role of coaching in community change processes.
• Plan ways to support each other in this coaching role.

Course Design: Overview of the Learning Process

We designed our approach to training coaches to provide new and experienced coaches with an opportunity to build on their current skills and wisdom by learning from the experience of previous coaches, sharing experiences with one another, studying materials, and reflecting on their experience in the coaching process. Specific goals for the process include:

1. Forging a cadre of committed people, unified by a shared sensibility about the work of coaching and in pursuit of common ends – especially service to volunteer teams engaged in planning for community change, equipped with skills, methodology and confidence.
2. Creating a learning network among practitioners to support the work of the RCCI and personal and professional development goals of its members
3. Exploring and sharing individually the ways that practitioners can align their purpose and personal skills and wisdom with an evolving ‘way’ of that is shaped by various writings about this work as well as by the coaches’ own experiences and insights as they apply ideas in service to the community teams
4. Grounding this coaching work in the history and context of past community change efforts.
5. Clarifying expectations, roles, and networks, and communication opportunities for community coaches.
To this end we will use conversation both real time and electronic, reflection, readings, and presentations to study and learn about the evolving ‘way’ of coaching. Two ways we can enhance the learning process include the use of reflective journal and participating in an electronic community of practice.

**Training Format**

Discussion will focus on the skill sets and tools used in effective coaching as well as the coaching mindset. Each session will include assigned readings to inform discussions, and participants will also be asked to complete assignments between sessions. Each on-line session will have time devoted to instruction, discussion and application. The on-site coaching clinic will focus primarily on tools, techniques, and skill development.

The schedule is as follows:
Session 1 (July 22 or 23: 1:30-3 CDT)
Session 2 (July 29 or 29, 1:30-3 CDT)
Anticipated sites for the coaching clinic include: Sioux City, August 4; Indianapolis, August 1.
Session 4: (August 19 or 20: 1:30-3 CDT)

Participants who would prefer to attend only the on-line sessions or the coaching clinic should contact the instructor at memery@iastate.edu

**Program Outline**

**Session 1**: (90 min via Adobe Connect) What is a community/organizational coach?
- Identify characteristics of the coaching role compared to other roles we may plan.
- Distinguish community and organizational coaching from other sorts of coaching.
- Video or audio of role play and discussion.
- Homework

**Session 2**: (90 min via Adobe Connect) The Art and the Science of Coaching for Community and Organizational Change.
- Introduction to Appreciative Inquiry
- Coaching skills:
  - Coaching techniques
  - Community development approaches and diagnostics
- Finding, creating, and making the most of coachable moments
- Video or audio of role play and discussion.
- Homework
**Session 3:** (6 hrs on site in three to 4 locations) Coaching clinic
- Uncovering best practices related to coaching.
- Developing strategies for improving our practice in community and organizational coaching.
- Role plays and situation room
- Managing the coaching role with intermediaries, communities, and funders.

**Session 4:** (60 min via Adobe Connect) Follow up on how coaching is working
- Individual sharing and reports
- Group discussion
- Next steps

**About the Instructor**

The instructor is Mary Emery. She has been involved in coaching for community change projects for over 5 years and facilitated two gathering with experienced coaches to learn more about this approach to community change work. For more information see

**Intended Audience**

Extension professionals who are involved in community/organizational change initiatives or plan to participate in such an initiative.

**Training Evaluation and Assessment**

As we engage in this work in progress, we will attend to the issues of evaluation and assessment on a regular basis. We want to document the process of evaluating how we are doing the training, how we are doing the coaching, etc. and the impact of the training. We will use the reflective journal and the communitycoaching.ning.com blog to assist in this effort as well as any future follow-up activities such as conference calls or social networking sites. We will also implement a formal course evaluation process.

Let’s look for options for working together to support individual efforts and interests in developing papers for presentation, workshops designs that can be added to existing programs, other professional opportunities.

**The Reflective Journal of Praxis**

Coaching is inherently an introspective activity. Coaches must be able to detect the assumptions behind actions and the fear of change to coach people into seeing alternatives and options. Thus, the work of coaching requires us to look at our own assumptions critically. We encourage coaches to keep a journal. The opportunity to reflect on the work of coaching will help us identify our challenges as well as to uncover
our own contributions to the wisdom of coaching. In order to facilitate this process for current coaches and also to help us evaluate and improve our approach to training coaches, the training includes a journaling piece. Each segment of the training will focus the journaling on a particular question or issue. While an integral part of the training, the journal itself will remain private, but we will ask that you share insights or questions with the group.

The purpose of the reflective journaling component of the coaches’ training is two-fold. First, since coaching is essentially an introspective activity, the journaling provides us with an opportunity to take the time to think through our experiences in relation to coaching. In our very busy professional and personal lives, we often lack opportunity for reflection, yet this tool is critically important to our learning process. Second, we hope that the journaling will aid us as we work together to build our ‘collective wisdom’ on the way of coaching for community change. We will use what we learn from one another’s reflection to improve our existing community or practice, to plan more effectively for future training and convening activities, and to share this wisdom among our partners and other collaborative ventures.

**Strategies for Effective Journaling**

- Journaling works best when we can identify a regular time and place to write.
- Effective journaling requires regular attention – even if it is brief.
- Everyone has their own comfort zone be it electronic, notebook, or otherwise. Choose the method that works best for you. We have added this section of the notebook to supply you with one method and as a convenience.
- Journaling is private writing, so worry about grammar and handwriting only to the extent that you want to.
- We will add to these strategies as we work together to make this tool an effective part of our learning process.

**Community of Practice Approach**

In addition to the webinars and on-site clinics, we encourage you to participation in the community of practice. We will use [http://communitycoaching.ning.com/](http://communitycoaching.ning.com/) to blog about issues, questions and concerns an to share materials and idea.
Suggestions for Developing Our Own Community of Practice Include:

- Check in regularly
- Nurture a culture of sharing “hot” news
- Advocate the strength of the network as a tool to;
  - develop and spread new practices faster
  - connect islands of knowledge,
  - foster cross-function, cross disciplinary collaboration
  - enhance participation across organizational boundaries (McKenzie)
- Link comments to real-world examples
- Follow the rules for giving and receiving feedback
- Remember the forum is a public environment and keep private information private
- For lengthy posts, compose in WORD or another word processor and paste the message into the post.
- When reacting or adding to another post, clarify what you are adding or reacting to
- Challenge us to look at things from a different perspective

For examples of communities of practice and strategies for success see:
http://www.lcsc.edu/icd/onlinecom.htm